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Legislative Black Caucus Welcomes AKAs to State Capitol

Sacramento, CA--More than 70 members of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. were greeted by members of the Legislative Black Caucus at their annual "AKA Day at the Capitol" on Monday, March 24.

Members from the California chapters of AKA converge on the Capitol every spring dressed in their *pink and green* to learn more about the legislative process and to meet with their elected representatives.

The day is a component of the sorority's National Connection Committee, which also focuses on developing women as viable candidates for public office, educating the community about voter registration and education programs, and engaging communities to become more involved in public policy.

In July 2008, the organization will celebrate its centennial at Howard University in Washington, DC.

Senator Mark Ridley-Thomas, Chairman of the Legislative Black Caucus, welcomed the women to the Capitol and congratulated them on their centennial.

"Being able to serve the community for 100 years is commendable," he said. He also spoke of the tough decisions facing legislators in light of the state's budget shortfall.

"As Legislators we must confront a budget which cuts funding for education, weakens the states health care safety net, and other social programs that our community largely depends on," Senator Ridley-Thomas said.

"My goal and one in which the Black Caucus shares is to protect those most vulnerable to these impending cuts. It's not secret that we have work cut out for us this year."

E. Lavonne Lewis, AKA Sorority, Inc., Far Western Regional Director, said that her "sorority understood the importance of being actively engaged in public policy issues that are pertinent to the African American community." She added that her sorority appreciated the LBC members taking the time to meet with them.

Also meeting with the women were Assembly Members, Curren Price (D-Los Angeles), Sandre Swanson (D-Oakland), Wilmer Amina Carter (D-San Bernardino), and Speaker-elect Karen Bass (D-Los Angeles).

Participants visited the LBC-sponsored exhibit "Allensworth: 100 Years of the California Dream," which is housed in the Capitol's historic museum rooms. Allensworth, a historic black town, is also celebrating its 100th anniversary.

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